

**NOAA Science Advisory Board
Teleconference Meeting
August 4, 2010
3:00-5:00 PM**

Presentations for this meeting will be posted on the SAB website at <http://www.sab.noaa.gov/Meetings/meetings.html>

Meeting Attendees

SAB members in attendance: Mr. Raymond Ban, Chair and Consultant, Weather Industry and Government Partnerships,, The Weather Channel; Dr. William Ballhaus, President and CEO (retired) The Aerospace Corporation; Dr. Eric J. Barron, President, Florida State University; Dr. Heidi Cullen, CEO, Climate Central; Dr. Eve Gruntfest, Director, Social Science Woven into Meteorology; Dr. Peter Kareiva, Chief Scientist and Director of Science, The Nature Conservancy; Dr. Frank Kudrna, President and CEO, Kudrna & Associates, Ltd.; Dr. James Sanchirico, Associate Professor, Environmental Science and Policy, University of California at Davis; Dr. Jerry Schubel, Executive Director, Aquarium of the Pacific; Dr. Gerald Wheeler, Executive Director Emeritus, National Science Teachers Association;

NOAA senior management and Line Office representatives in attendance: Paul Sandifer, Acting Senior Science Advisor, Holly Bamford, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Ocean Service Thomas Karl, Acting Director, NOAA Climate Service, Chester Koblinsky, Director of Climate Program Office, Craig Mclean, Acting Assistant Administrator, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; Alexander MacDonald, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Laboratories and Cooperative Institutes, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research.

Staff for the SAB in attendance: Cynthia J. Decker, Executive Director; Marcey Guramatunhu and Mary Anne Whitcomb

Call to Order:

SAB Chair, Ray Ban, called the meeting to order and outlined the three agenda topics: Ray thanked members and NOAA staff for making the call.

- Discussion of the SAB Working Group Comments on the NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan;
- Discussion of the Transmittal Letter for the Spring 2010 Climate Working Group Meeting Report
- Discussion of the NOAA Science Workshop Report

Ray Ban added a fourth topic to the agenda—whether Working Groups should be asked to provide comments on the draft National Weather Service Strategic Plan.

Discussion of SAB Working Group Comments Received on the NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan (NGSP)

Ray Ban thanked the board liaisons who worked with the working groups and said that the comments were well done. Paul Doremus conveyed Mary Glackin's regrets at not being able to attend the teleconference. Paul noted that NOAA is very grateful for the thoughts and discussion that went into the comments and he thanked the SAB and Working groups. NOAA is looking forward to responding to all SAB comments.

Ray Ban asked the Board member liaisons to each working group to do a quick summary of the working group comments.

Data Archiving and Access Requirements Working Group (DAARWG)

As Thomas Zacharia, the Board liaison to the Data Archiving and Access Requirements Working Group was not able to attend the teleconference; Ray Ban summarized the DAARWG comments. In the DAARWG comments the main theme was for the Plan to include data more explicitly in the mission and vision. All issues in the vision and mission will require data analysis, collection and dissemination and that there be more emphasis on data stewardship, access and archiving. The comments stressed that data cuts across virtually all aspects in the NGSP. The need for preserving information will require significant resources. Although not inherently strategic, this is an operational imperative close to the level of a strategy.

Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group (ESMWG)

Jim Sanchirico, member of the Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group, said the ESMWG had several chances to provide comments on the NGSP. Highlights of the comments provided on the draft NGSP included: need to identify the audience for the document, need for better integration across objectives and heterogeneity in detail across objectives. The ESMWG commented that the document seems passive in the NOAA roles; they suggested that NOAA should take leadership in developing options for the future, instead of current focus of responding to issues. It was not clear to the group when you develop a Climate Service how this will impact the rest of the organization. The NGSP should incorporate these ideas. ESMWG gave specific examples of terminology and comments such as in resilience. Definition of terms should be elaborated on in the highlights to include this type of detail.

Ray Ban agreed with point on term definition—this needs to be put forth as something that requires some effort.

Environmental Information Services Working Group (EISWG)

Ray Ban summarized highlights of the comments from the Environmental Information Services Working Group. Ray said the EISWG spent several hours in calls to formulate its comments. One area highlighted was in definition of terms, e.g., "stakeholders" vs. "partners" and how they are referenced in the plan. The comments asked if there is a clear understanding by NOAA of these differentiations. Partnerships are important; additionally the definition of partners in context of strategy is significant and the comments stressed how vital it is for NOAA to grow and nurture partnerships. The EISWG noted that ecosystems were very water-specific; and pointed out the lack

of focus on other ecosystems including mountains, forests and cities. The comments also highlighted the relevancy and need for social science expertise in NOAA. The EISWG also noted that the metrics for tracking progress of core strategies should be at least addressed at a high level.

Extension, Outreach and Education Working Group (EOEWG)

Frank Kudrna and Gerry Wheeler provided highlights of the comments from the Extension, Outreach and Education Working Group (EOEWG). Frank said they were pleased to see engagement statement included as a section in the Plan. There is a need to include in the plan that NOAA is a service agency; this message does not come out in the current document. The comments noted that the importance of information delivery by NOAA is critical. Frank also stated that partnerships need to be stressed in the plan and that, there needs to be a definition of “engagement”. The comments noted that scientific literacy work in NOAA should be tied to university/education standards and that references to recent work in education and extension partnerships should be noted in the plan. NOAA put a lot of work into the education plan and should put reference to it in the report—missing reference to this and other work done in last few years.

Frank suggested that wording needs to be changed to include asking people what they need rather than telling people. Gerry Wheeler stressed that engagement is a major culture shift and suggested the establishment of a standing working committee on engagement. In the climate service the issue of uncertainty and how the general public deals with it is a great opportunity for partnerships with educators. Jerry underscored that NOAA has an important service role, this is a culture shift, it is also translating data into info tailored to different interest groups and showing people how to use the information.

Oceans and Health Working Group (OHWG)

Frank Kudrna provided highlights of the OHWG comments. Before his remarks he noted that the process to comment on the NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan has been a good use of SAB working groups and thinks this process for working groups to review draft NOAA documents and reports should be continued.

Frank report that OHWG was pleased with the visibility of ocean health in the document but there is some opportunity for strengthening. The group felt that engagement was critical—there was a need not to just talk to, but to listen to, stakeholders. The group stressed the identity of ocean health, both human and marine, as a strategic partnership issue and suggested “one ocean one health” as a concept for NOAA.

Social Sciences Working Group (SSWG)

Jim Sanchirico noted that the SSWG was an *ad hoc* working group; a subset of the group provided comments on the plan. The document reads well on understanding the importance of social sciences; it says the right things. However there is no discussion of implementation—this is a hard thing to do it and how do you do it. The SSWG final report had some suggestions on how to help in the implementation process that might be useful.

Climate Working Group (CWG)

Heidi Cullen provided highlights from the five pages of comments from the CWG. The group concurs with high level goals of the plan but thought there were missing components. There is no mention of the role or what NOAA expects of Cooperative Institutes or from research partnerships in international domain. Heidi stressed five points from the CWG comments.

1. Plan gives more priority to climate change vs. variability terms
2. Support is needed for research commitments to climate observations, ships and overall research infrastructure
3. Land, surface-based processes are ignored in the plan
4. Integrated modeling framework should be linked to assessment mechanisms.
5. More emphasis is needed on interagency partnerships, particularly with NASA and USGS.

Discussion of Working Group comments

Ray Ban said the CWG comments were valid but some were more strategic and related to the plan; while others focused on implementation and were more detailed.

Eve Gruntfest asked what happens next with these comments.

Ray Ban responded this is the first time the SAB has requested comments from multiple working groups. From a Board perspective, there is a need to distill the comments and provide the most crucial to NOAA.

Paul Doremus responded that he has all the comments and NOAA staff will be reading these comments closely and responding back to the SAB. Some comments are geared toward implementation and they will be responding in future interactions. Having strategic top-level views would be most appreciated from the SAB; identifying the major things they want NOAA to respond to well.

Eric Barron said the plan is a very readable document; the Board should resist comments that make it less readable. If significant, comments should be able to be made without adding a lot more words.

Jerry Schubel noted that the plan does not have level of inspiration of NOAA having a leadership role in this uncertain world.

Ray Ban agreed that if Board could focus on a few critical messages of insights to NOAA, the SAB would be providing significant help.

Ray Ban said that comments pointing out that the NGSP does not emphasize NOAA as a leader resonate with him. In the broader community, NOAA is looked to for leadership. How does the Board feel about leadership as a strategic item to put on the white board?

Jerry Schubel said NOAA has always done things right; NOAA has done things that are needed. Now this document reads too much like a bureaucratic document.

Jim Sanchirico suggested that three major points could be emphasized in the transmittal letter and the group could either transmit the highlights document or all the working group comments.

Ray Ban said leadership is not captured in highlights document and he wanted to emphasize leadership. Frank provided emphasis on service and this is also not reflected in the highlights document. He wanted to consider those as part of a highlights document, and not a transmittal letter with highlights. Cynthia pointed out that the concept behind highlights document was to identify concepts mentioned by more than one working group to facilitate SAB review of all of the working group comments and, as such, may not be the instrument you want to use.

Paul Doremus said it would be very helpful to pull forward the overall view that the structure and level of content is sound and is endorsed by Board as a whole. A statement on document strengths would be very helpful.

Frank Kudrna supports leadership concept; within next five years it is critical that the American public know that climate change and global warming are real and must be dealt with. That type of topic and issue of leadership by NOAA are critical.

Jim Sanchirico said the role of developing adaptation to climate change would be helpful.

Ray Ban said that in the transmittal letter we can emphasize leadership and service. He agreed that the content of the Plan is good but just may need some refinement. The SAB set up working groups as the SAB did not have all the expertise needed to provide advice to NOAA. Ray expressed concern about changing wording from working groups as these are the experts in their fields. The transmittal letter can cover overarching themes but we want the voices of the working groups to be heard. He asked that if the Board followed Jim's suggestion, saying here are Working Group comments and here are points we want to emphasize. Do we expect a response from NOAA to just the emphasized points or all of the comments from the working groups?

Jim Sanchirico said some of the working groups put a lot of effort into their comments and he is concerned that they might not get a response back from NOAA. Working groups need to know their comments were considered.

Ray Ban said Jim's suggestion that the Board transmit the working group reports as is, with a cover letter sounds reasonable. The response by NOAA would then be to all items submitted by the working groups. Ray said NOAA has no obligation to individual member comments; just to comments submitted by the SAB as a Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) working group.

Paul Doremus said NOAA is prepared to respond to the sum total of the comments from the Board, and the comments from the Working Groups. NOAA is receiving an enormous number of public comments: they won't be responding to the individual comments from the public. However NOAA will be responding to comments from the SAB and other advisory groups and are treating these comments with a great deal of care. Discussion of SAB comments is easier since there are no conflicts among comments and there is a lot of complementarity and overlapping points. NOAA is committed to a response to all SAB comments.

Ray Ban said as the Board thinks of a transmittal letter, they have the option to highlight or emphasize themes or add themes. They could also just transmit all of the working group comments.

Frank Kudrna suggested the SAB should highlight some priority items—leadership, service, partnerships-- in a transmittal letter.

Jerry Schubel seconds Frank's suggestion about highlighting priority items. Jerry would add metrics—making them more quantifiable and suggests also a more active more quantifiable, tone for the document as it is too passive now. Jerry suggested saying that the plan is a very good document.

Ray Ban asked for comments on themes for the transmittal letter. So far the themes discussed include that the plan has strength, reads well and is structurally sound. There should be a more active posture in the document; these are form versus substance comments. In terms of substance, the letter should emphasize leadership, NOAA's role as a service agency, and the importance of partnerships.

Gerry Wheeler suggested that the Board skip the structural items and get right to the important themes to be addressed.

Ray Ban said these themes are leadership, service agency, and importance of partnerships.

Eve Grunfest said Jane Lubchenco was concerned about reputation of NOAA, particularly with research and wonders if with the emphasis on service if we are de-emphasizing research.

Gerry Wheeler said we must be careful not to say must be careful not to appear to de-emphasize research.

Frank Kudrna said the Board should emphasize linking research to NOAA's service.

Jerry Schubel noted that NOAA's research strength comes in the document; NOAA has an obligation to use that knowledge to serve society.

Frank Kudrna added that communication and listening to stakeholders is an important topic or a subtopic to service.

Ray Ban said stakeholder input may be added to the list but we may not want to make more work in the transmittal letter.

Jerry Schubel said outstanding service organizations stay close to customers and that is a point that could be emphasized.

Eve Grunfest asked where the CIs missing in the document—would this just be in the Working Group comments.

Ray Ban responded this would be part of the overall comments, not just in the transmittal letter. All of the comments have the same amount of stature from the Board's point of view as we pass them to NOAA, nothing is being lost.

Cynthia Decker asked if you need the highlights document at all. Ray does not see it as needed as part of the transmittal as all of working group comments are being submitted.

Ray Ban said he is comfortable that the Board is capturing the entirety of all of the Working Groups and the SAB is not acting as a filter, based on the emphasis that the Working Groups are the subject matter experts.

The next step is for Cynthia and Ray to draft a transmittal letter and circulate for comments and then to submit it.

Action: The SAB will transmit its comments to NOAA on the draft NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan.

Action: NOAA will respond to the SAB comments on the draft NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan.

Discussion of the Transmittal Letter for the Climate Working Group (CWG) Spring 2010 Meeting Report

Ray Ban asked Heidi Cullen, liaison to the Climate Working Group, for her thoughts on the draft letter. He thanked Heidi and CWG Chair Tony Busalacchi for drafting the letter.

Heidi Cullen reported that after the presentation of the CWG Spring 2010 meeting report at the July SAB meeting, a letter was drafted to accompany the report. The draft transmittal letter included two concerns and three pieces of advice from the report.

Eric Barron noted the recommendations in the transmittal letter seemed not to be connected to, or follow from, the report. Eric did not see how the recommendations in the draft transmittal letter respond to the concerns.

Heidi Cullen said the CWG report did not provide recommended actions for these concerns.

Cynthia Decker agreed; the CWG raised concerns in the report but did not have recommendations on them. Instead the CWG offered separate recommendations.

Ray Ban agreed; he thought each category was independent of the other.

Eric Barron said the SAB letter is just to transmit the report; and is not discussing what should be done to address the concerns.

Cynthia Decker and Heidi Cullen agreed; Cynthia added the SAB is discussing this issue now.

Eric Barron said it might be better to say the SAB listened to a report by the CWG and believed that specific elements should be forwarded to NOAA for consideration. The SAB notes the following

concerns presented in the CWG report. Eric did not want the letter to read that they edited the report and had had discussions on the report's content.

Heidi Cullen asked if these recommendations represent the SAB recommendations.

Eric Barron said these would be recommendations from the SAB so the members should be careful on the wording in the letter.

Eric Barron suggested separating concerns and recommended actions. He would be careful that these are found in the CWG report.

Heidi Cullen said that sounds like the SAB does not endorse it.

Eric Barron suggested that if the SAB wants stronger language, he is no longer happy with transmitting the report without further review.

Cynthia Decker said the Board is considering two options: transmitting the CWG report or reviewing/adopting its recommendations as the SAB. If the former use wording on transmitting CWG report and transmitting for their consideration—just passing it on.

Paul Sandifer asked if the SAB had time to fully consider the report.

Eric Barron said he would be happy for the CWG to submit the report to the SAB and have time for the SAB to review it and only send forward the recommendations that it supports. Eric wants to make sure it is clear that the SAB is not endorsing it if the intention is just to transmit a report from a meeting.

Ray Ban said there were some things in the CWG report that should be passed on including the point that there has been no formal response from NOAA on recent reports and there should be a transition plan from where we are now to a functioning Climate Service.

Eric Barron agreed that a transition plan and the need for response to SAB reports these seem appropriate as an SAB report.

There was discussion about whether this was a report or discussion at the last CWG meeting. Heidi Cullen said it was a report; Cynthia Decker agreed that it was a report from the meeting that had recommendations; this report is not just a program review. Working groups normally just submit recommendations not meeting reports. The CWG does meeting reports and this one has recommendations. Eric said other reports were reviewed that by the SAB and were accepted by the SAB as its recommendations.

Ray Ban said the sense of the Board was that this report contains content that should be passed to NOAA. A lot of smart people got together and this is what we think NOAA should take a look at.

Eric Barron suggested that if you say to summarize this discussion, that the CWG report includes two concerns and three recommendations he would be happy. Eric noted the Board should avoid the wording "the SAB believes" He suggests keeping the last sentence. The SAB also notes...as the late response by NOAA to the reports is an SAB issue

Rick Rosen said the SAB reports have been very influential documents to NOAA. This s does not excuse lateness of response and that there is a process to get responses to the SAB this fall.

Eric, Heidi and Cynthia will revise letter to reflect discussion; then will send to the SAB for approval and transmit to NOAA.

Action: The SAB will transmit the Climate Working Group Spring 2010 meeting report to NOAA.

Action: NOAA will respond to the recommendations in the Climate Working Group Spring 2010 meeting report.

Discussion of the NOAA Science Workshop Report

Ray Ban introduced the next agenda item, discussion of the NOAA Science Workshop Report. He noted that on the final afternoon of the July SAB meeting there was a presentation on this topic by Paul Sandifer. However some members had left the meeting by this time and there was not a significant discussion. It was also noted in the presentation that there was a white paper report that was circulated shortly before the SAB meeting and Board members had not had a chance to review it. The goal of this discussion is how to provide feedback to NOAA on the Science Workshop report and further insights on how the Board would like to engage with the report in the future..

Gerry Wheeler said the group's identification of uncertainty as an issue and the need to work with it is a key opportunity to work with the public to help understand science and how it works with uncertainty.

Jeremy Jackson suggested that the Board should say this is a good first step and look forward to additional NOAA interactions on how it is dealing with issues raised.

Ray Ban noted that as he looks at the report, some points have been substantially addressed and NOAA should proceed. On other points like next steps on external engagement, the American Meteorological Society has a Commission on the weather and climate enterprise that would be good to engage on this topic. Ray thought that the workshop was great; the topics were great and he is not sure what else can be offered at this time.

Jim Sanchirco agrees with Jeremy's comments that the workshop was great; Jim also likes the idea of developing and nourishing young scientists in NOAA and suggested that anything the SAB could say to support NOAA in developing a career track for scientists and getting top scientists to NOAA would be helpful.

Ray Ban summarized that if the Board agreed, we would draft a letter emphasizing the support of the Board for the project and adding the suggestion on exploring the AMS on external engagement and other thoughts as identified by Board members.

Paul Doremus said support for the NGSP has embedded in it support for the results of the science workshop.

Cynthia Decker asked how the SAB wants to be engaged in the future processes.

Paul Sandifer asked if the Board would be interested in getting updates and in providing ongoing advice as they move forward and to assist them in ensuring external engagement is provided in the future.

Ray Ban agreed with Paul's suggestions; the Board does want to get updates on progress and is interested in providing ongoing advice. A letter will be drafted summarizing these points; it will be circulated to members for comment and when final, it will be submitted to NOAA.

Action: The SAB will send a letter to NOAA on its support of the NOAA Science Workshop and its willingness to continue to work with NOAA on this project.

SAB Comments on the National Weather Service Strategic Plan

Ray Ban discussed the final agenda topic: SAB comments on the National Weather Service (NWS) strategic plan. Ray noted that the NWS strategic plan was first brought to the SAB in July 2009 at the Long Beach meeting when members were briefed on the development of the plan. That plan was put out for public comment last week. Ray proposed that the SAB provide comments because it is a strategic plan and the SAB was briefed on it. Ray suggested that we ask the SAB working groups who are interested, to comment on it. There may not be much interest; the EISWG is definitely interested; maybe the Climate Working Group and the Fire Weather Research Working Group would also be interested.

Discussion

Jerry Schubel suggested that what Ray proposed is a good way to go forward.

Ray Ban asked if there was any disagreement; there was none.

Cynthia Decker noted that the working groups can decide whether or not to participate and there would need to be another teleconference in September to discuss the comments.

A motion was made to request comments on the NWS Strategic Plan. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Action: The SAB will request comments from its working groups on the National Weather Service Draft Strategic Plan. Comments received will be discussed in a September teleconference meeting.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM ET.

Summary of Meeting Actions

Action 1: The SAB will transmit its comments to NOAA on the draft NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan.

Action 2: NOAA will respond to the SAB comments on the draft NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan.

Action 3: The SAB will transmit the Climate Working Group Spring 2010 meeting report to NOAA.

Action 4: NOAA will respond to the recommendations in the Climate Working Group Spring 2010 meeting report.

Action 5: The SAB will send a letter to NOAA on its support of the NOAA Science Workshop and its willingness to continue to work with NOAA on this project.

Action 6: The SAB will request comments from its working groups on the National Weather Service Draft Strategic Plan. Comments received will be discussed in a September teleconference meeting.